

**MockREF2018**

**De Montfort University, Leicester**

**Dr Mike Blow**

**Output: *Associations and Dislocations: Multisensory Interfaces for Collaborative Musical Experience***

## Output statement

*Associations and Dislocations* is a series of projects broadly exploring the perceptual mechanisms and effects of presenting sound alongside images or objects, and the use of multi-person interfaces to encourage a collaborative sonic experience. Of interest are the emerging relationships embodied in the artworks (sonic/physical/visual, person/person, person/work).

The works address several research concerns related to multisensory art and interaction:

1. The use of sound to emphasize or contradict qualities of an object/image and the perceptual mechanisms by which this happens.
2. Relationships between hearing and other senses.
3. Eco's concept of the 'open work' applied to audiovisual art; exploring semantic gaps between visual and sonic media.
4. Designing the affordances of multi-person interfaces to facilitate new musical experiences.
5. Creating interfaces that appeal to visitors of all ages, work irrespective of musical background and which reward exploration.
6. Encouraging collaborative play and the development of collaborative strategies among participants.
7. Bringing collaborative multisensory art to a large non-specialist audience through exhibition in public spaces and museums.

Research concerns are addressed by exhibiting physical artefacts which are designed to create insights into one or more of the research themes. Examples are visitors intuitively touching the spheres of Pod/Colony upon entering the work (2, 5, 7) or hugging the spheres to feel the vibrations (2); or visitors to Peace Music Project composing with strangers (4, 5, 6, 7). In Athens I provided sounds for 4 photographers, exploring (1, 3). Papers exploring these insights are presented academically.

This portfolio has found a broad audience and is becoming known internationally. Pod is permanently installed in Science Museum London with visitor numbers (mainly schoolchildren) of 500,000/year. Colony attracted 30,000 visitors on its last 3 outings and has international bookings for 2019. A new project, Democratic Electronic Music, will potentially tour UK festivals in 2019.

### **Supporting Evidence: Related Scholarly Activity**

Blow, M. (2018) Durational Sound Art (presentation). 'Bringing New Music to New Audiences' International Conference, De Montfort University UK, 21 September 2018.

Blow, M. (2017) On Transformations and Relationships between Sound and Three-Dimensional Form (presentation). Sound-Image Colloquium, Greenwich University, 10-12 Nov 2017.

Blow, M. (2016) Pod: A Multi-Sensory Sound Interface. Proceedings, 3rd International Conference on Live Interfaces, June 29th - July 3rd, 2016, Brighton UK.

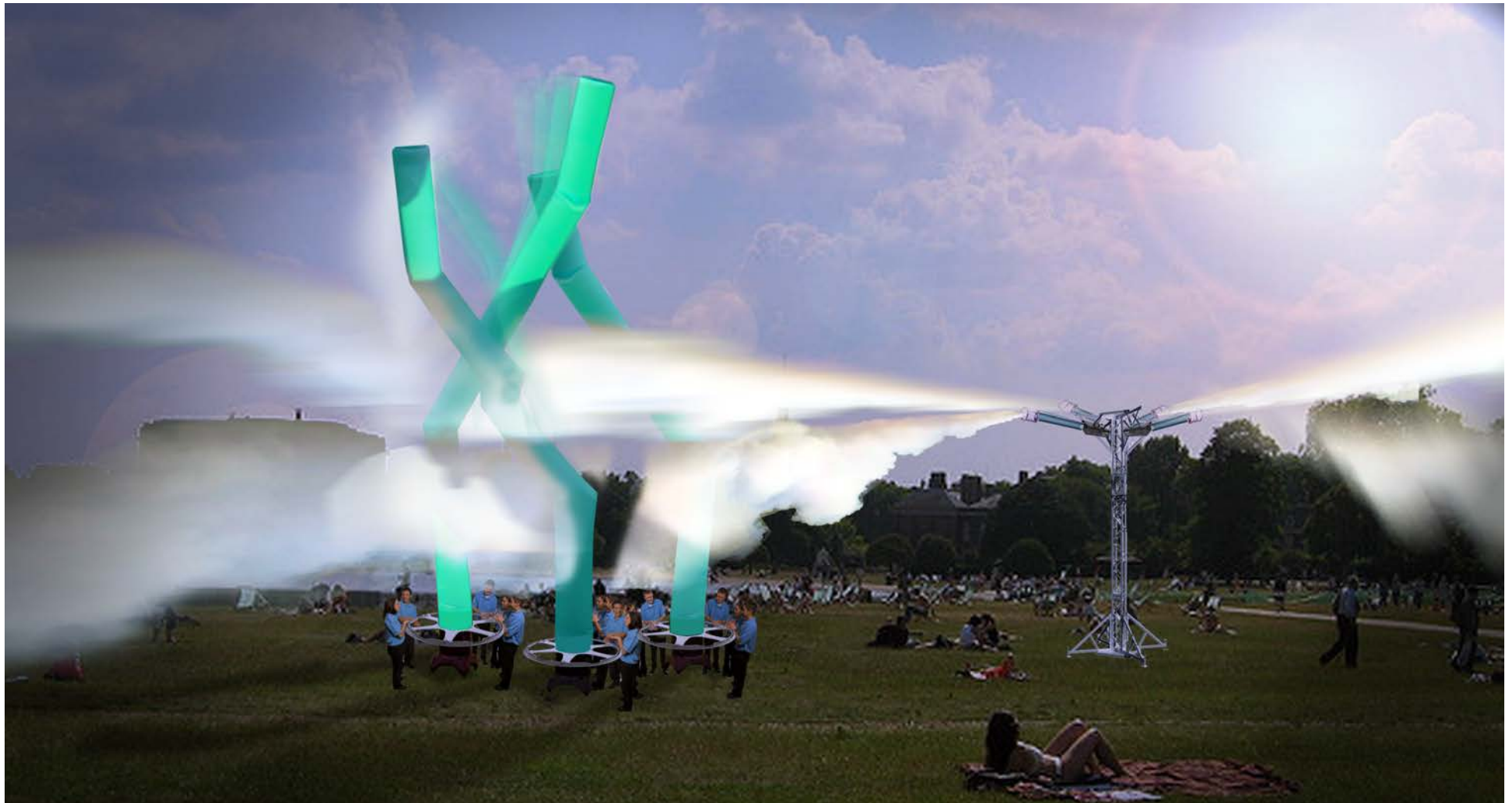
Blow M. (2015) Disrupted Architecture: Reimagining Buildings through Sound. Proceedings, 21st International Symposium on Electronic Arts, 14-19 August 2015, Vancouver Canada.

<https://www.dora.dmu.ac.uk/handle/2086/14746>

Blow M. (2013) Solar Work 2: A Solar-Powered Sound Artwork. Leonardo Music Journal Vol 23, December 2013. MIT Press, Cambridge Mass. USA. Pp. 10-11.

## Supporting Evidence: Artworks

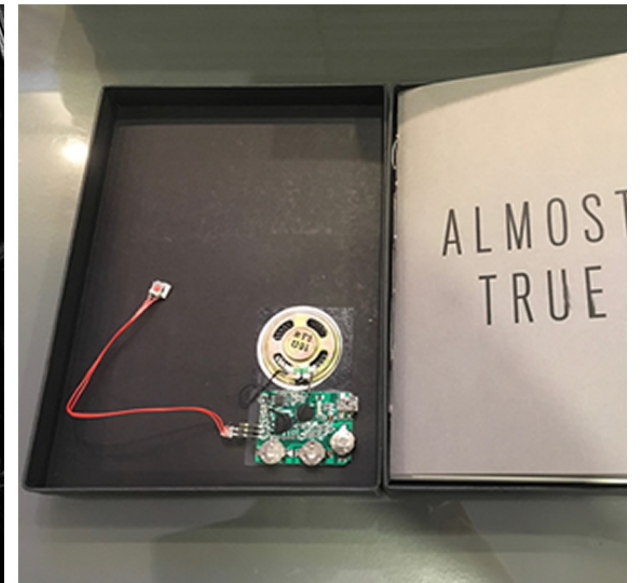
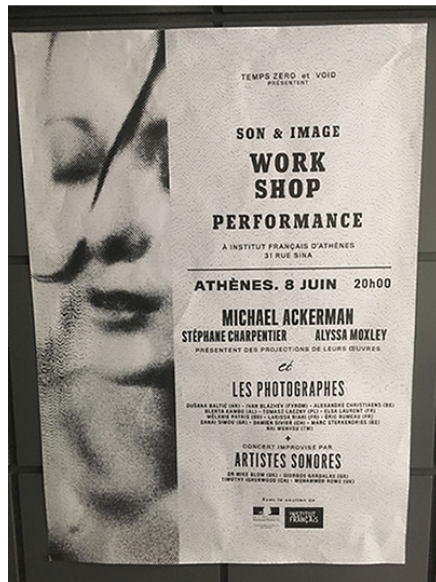
**Democratic Electronic Music** (2019). R+D for major group interactive soundart exhibition proposal developed and led by Mike Blow, including Scanner, Kathy Hinde, John Richards (DMU), the R10 Collective, Matthew Olden and Mat Emmett (Plymouth). R+D phase undertaken in 2018 funded for £6k by Without Walls consortium; £25k full proposal is under review, if commissioned will be at UK festivals in 2019.



**Temps Zero and Void Sound/Image Workshop** (June 1-8 2018). Improvised live score to a portfolio of photographs and film, Institut Francais Athens 8/06/18. With 13 photographers and 3 sound artists. Available online and as an audiovisual book published by Void.

<https://vimeo.com/275498880>

<https://www.dora.dmu.ac.uk/handle/2086/17023>



Photos: Mike Blow, Stephane Carpentier, Nai Wenshu



**The Peace Music Project** (2017). A multisensory interactive artwork encouraging visitors to collaboratively create music using two ex-military weapons control panels from Tornado fighter jets. £1k support from Oxford Contemporary Music.

<http://evolutionaryart.co.uk/peace.php>



Peace Music Project at Supersonic, Ashmolean Oxford 3/3/17 and Fort Process 22/09/18. Photos: Mike Blow

**Peace Music Project: Exhibitions**

Fort Process, Newhaven Fort Sussex 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 2018

Supersonic, Ashmolean Museum Oxford 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017



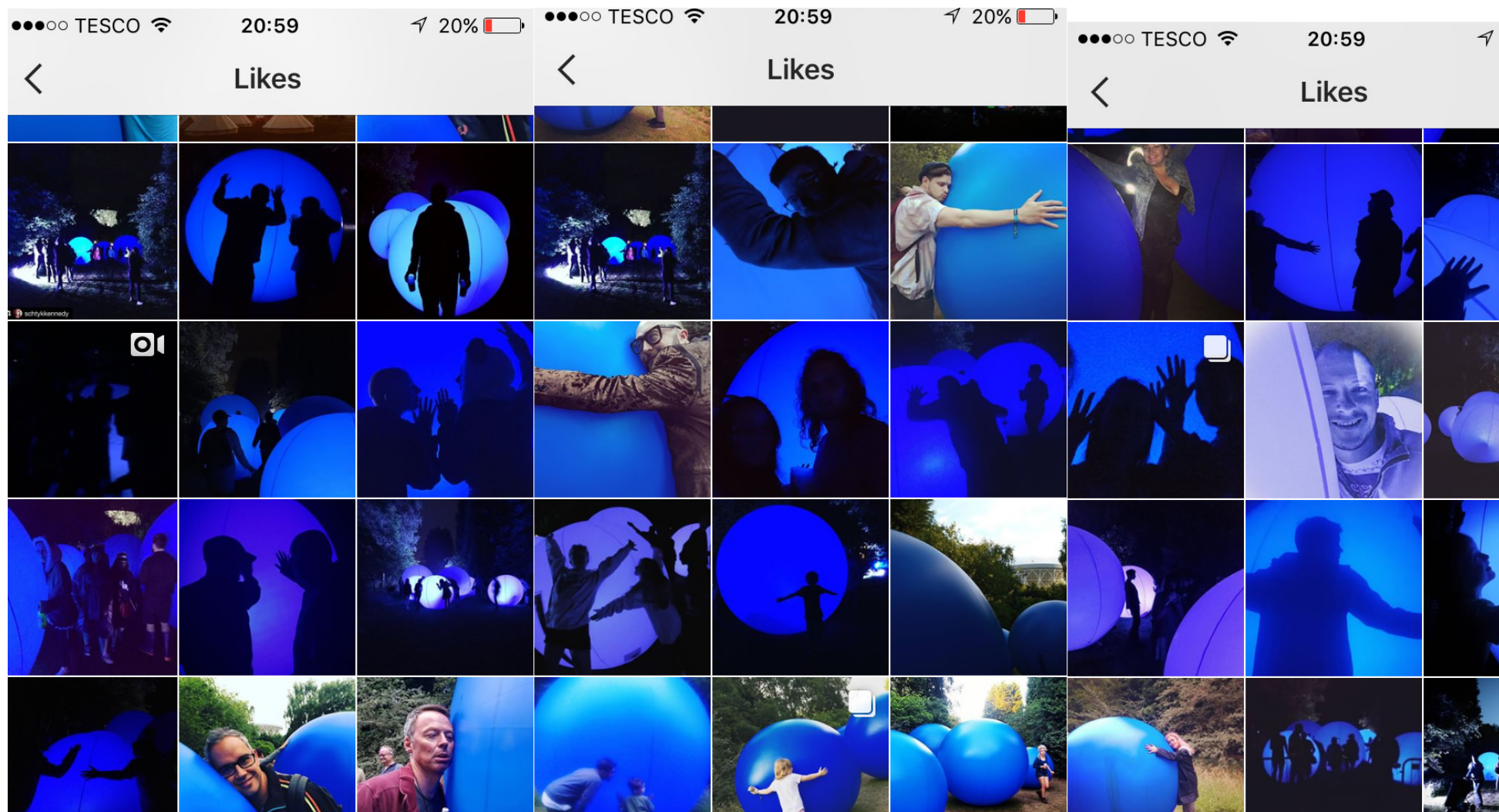
**Colony** (2016, collaboration with Alison Ballard) is an evolution of Pod, using more spheres of different sizes and a bespoke 20-minute composition. Created with £26k funding from Arts Council England, Sound and Music and Oxford Contemporary Music and produced by Edmund Harcourt/Hogarth Productions.

<http://evolutionaryart.co.uk/colony.php>



Colony at Cheltenham Jazz Festival May 2018. Photos: Mike Blow





Colony, instagram posts by visitors following Bluedot Festival, June 2017

## **Colony: Exhibitions**

Cheltenham Jazz Festival, 5-6<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Kendal Calling festival, 27-30<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Bluedot festival, July 7-9<sup>th</sup> 2017

Crewe town center, July 1-2<sup>nd</sup> 2017

Supersonic, Ashmolean Museum Oxford, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017

Oxford Christmas light festival, 25-26<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016

Dundee Light Night, 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016

Bournemouth Arts by the Sea, 8-9<sup>th</sup> Oct 2016



**TIWWA** (2016, collaboration with iDAT/Plymouth University). An interactive multisensory sculptural artwork, presented at Tate Modern, which visualised and sonified data from the building and social media.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6tNeNYg4mE>

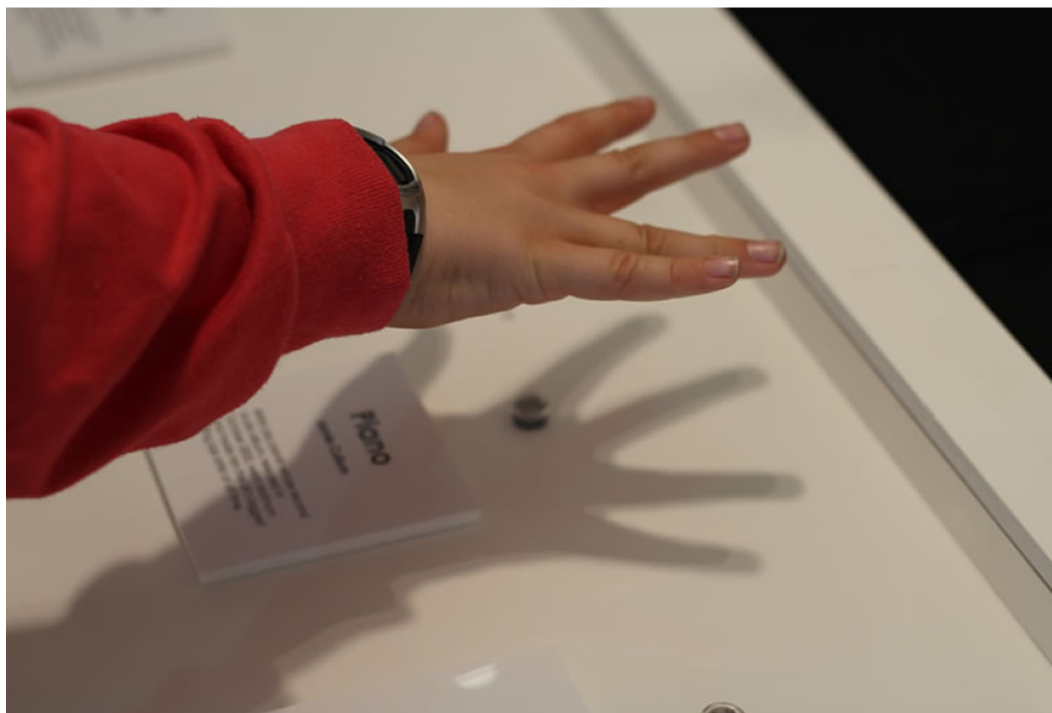


This Is Where We Are, exhibition at Tate Modern June 17-19 2016. Photos: Mike Blow, Mike Phillips



**Shadowplay** (2015). Presented at Cheltenham Jazz Festival May 1-3 2015. A multi-user light-sensitive control panel allows visitors to create their own 'remix' from recordings of musicians appearing in the festival.

<http://evolutionaryart.co.uk/shad.php>



Shadowplay at Cheltenham Jazz Festival 2015. Photos: Mike Blow

## **Shadowplay collaborators and texts used on the work**

### **Jonathan Silk**

Scottish drummer and composer, recently named "One to watch" in Jazzwise magazine. Jonathan was awarded one of the six Yamaha Jazz Scholarships in 2011 and the same year won the Tony Levin prize for "the most swinging drummer" held at Birmingham Conservatoire.

### **Billy Martin**

Billy is a drummer and percussionist, best known to music enthusiasts as one-third of the indescribable Medeski Martin & Wood. He often collaborates with other musicians in improvisational projects, many of which are documented on his own Amulet Records imprint which he founded in 1995.

### **Mike Blow**

British electronic artist, musician and academic. Attempts to live by Immaculate Heart College Art Department rule number 4: "Consider everything an experiment".

### **Jamie Cullum**

British jazz pianist whose second studio album, released in October 2003, went platinum and made him the UK's biggest selling jazz artist of all time. Cullum draws his inspiration from many different musicians and listens to an eclectic mix of music from Miles Davis to Tom Waits.

### **Matthew Bourne**

Pianist and composer Matthew Bourne first came to national attention as one of the winners of the Perrier Jazz Awards in London, 2001. Continues to be in constant demand as a pianist and analogue synthesist and has released two solo albums.

### **Kit Downes**

British jazz pianist who plays regularly with his own trio, Stan Sulzmann, Troyka, The Golden Age of Steam, Sam Crockatt and Clark Tracey. Kit won the BBC Jazz Award 2008: Rising Star and a Yamaha Jazz Scholarship Award in 2009.

### **Matt Gough**

Trumpeter and educator who leads the Matt Gough dectet and The Forgotten Fairground Project, and works with The Jonathan Silk Big Band, The Young Pilgrims, the Three Belles and Mike Fletcher Big Band.

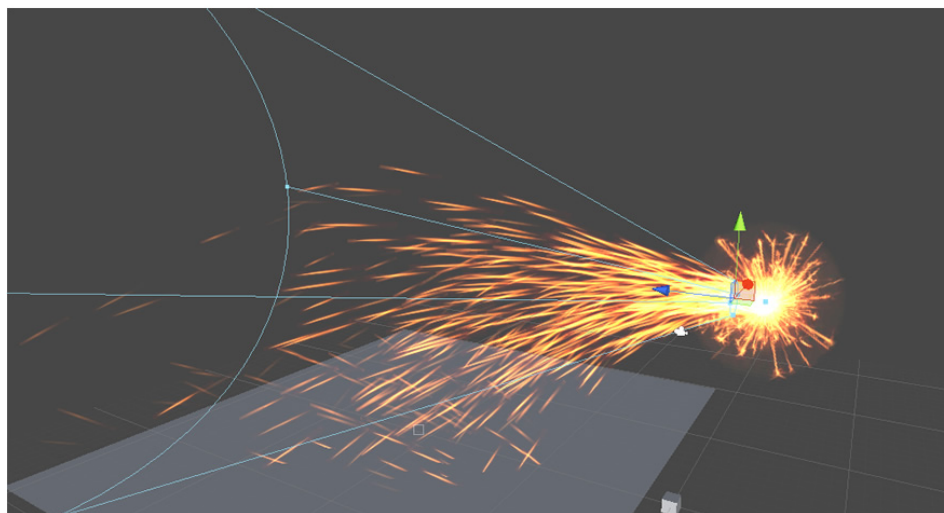
### **Kayoko Blow**

Born in Osaka, grew up playing in bands in Kyoto, and studied art and music at City University New York. Her interest is experimental music improvisation in guitar, voice, and electric devices. For this piece, she is singing her original Tanka (formal Japanese poetry, similar to Haiku).

**Traak!** (2015, collaboration with Eric White and John Twycross of Oxford Brookes University). Augmented reality artwork overlaying physical cube 'instruments' with virtual animations and sounds. A response to the itonarumori of Luigi Russolo. Part of the Arts Council-funded AGAST (Avant-Gardes and Speculative Technology) project. Photos: Mike Blow / John Twycross.

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/poetry-centre/projects/avant-gardes-and-speculative-technology/>

<http://evolutionaryart.co.uk/traak.php>





**Traak! Exhibitions:**

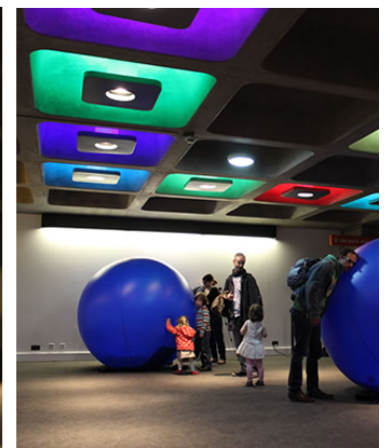
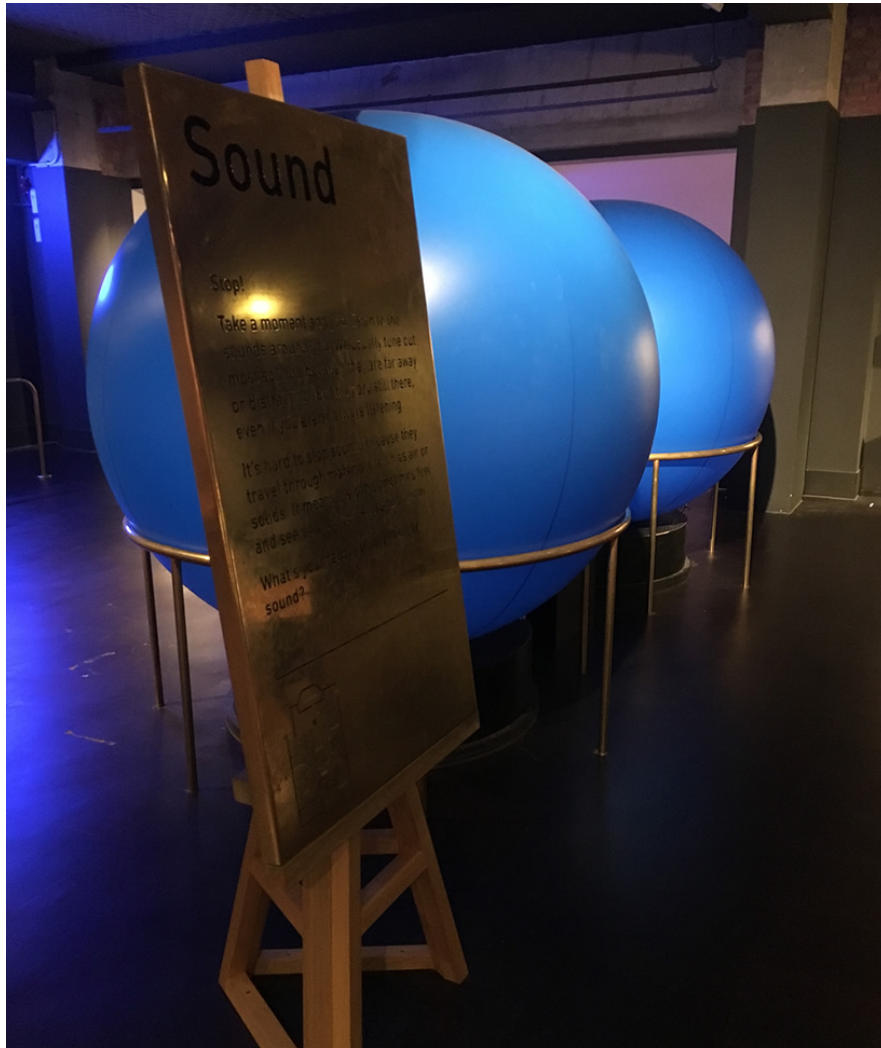
Mediacity 5 conference, Plymouth University UK, 1st – 3rd May 2015

Digital Creatives Oxford, 19th March 2015

Audiograft 15, Oxford Brookes University, 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**Pod** (2013, 2016, collaboration with Alison Ballard) consists of sounds playing inside 1.8m inflatable spheres. The work is sonic, tactile and visual, as visitors are able to touch the spheres to gain an understanding of sound as a vibratory phenomenon.

<http://evolutionaryart.co.uk/pod.php>



Pod at Science Museum London and Barbican, London. Photos: Mike Blow / Alison Ballard.

**Pod exhibitions:**

Science Museum London Wonderlab Gallery, Oct 2016 – Oct 2021

Reading 2016, Reading's Year of Culture 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016

Audiograft 16, Oxford, 09-20<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Oxford Light Night, 21-22<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2014

The Barbican London, 01-02<sup>nd</sup> March 2014

Whitley Arts Festival Reading, 25<sup>th</sup> Oct 2013